

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

Mr. J. T. Bowman, private secretary to the Governor, appeared at the bar of the House, and being duly announced, presented a message from the Governor, which was read as follows:

Governor's Office,
Austin, Texas, March 24, 1913.

To the House of Representatives:

House bill No. 46 is returned herewith without approval.

This bill authorizes the commissioners court to pay ex-officio salaries to county attorneys for certain services therein mentioned. Article 5, Section 1, of the Constitution of the State, contains the following provision:

"The county attorney shall receive as compensation only such fees, commissions and perquisites as may be prescribed by law."

In an opinion recently furnished to members of the Legislature, our able Attorney General held that the Legislature had no power to fix salaries for certain county officers because the Constitution prescribes that their compensation shall come through fees, commissions and perquisites. The bill, therefore, which I return herewith seems clearly to be in conflict with the Constitution.

In my general message to the Legislature I strongly urged a change from the fee system method of compensating county officers and advocated fixed salaries. I sincerely hope and trust that before the Regular Session of the Legislature adjourns it will propose and submit an amendment to the Constitution authorizing the Legislature to prescribe and fix the salaries of all district, county and precinct officials and abolish the fee system, under which many irregularities and much injustice are now practiced.

Respectfully,
O. B. COLQUITT,
Governor of Texas.